

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

for amendments to three master plans in northern Wisconsin

Overview

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recognizes sound master planning is a partnership effort. To be successful, the planning process must involve the people it serves and the management plans (along with variances and amendments) need to be broadly supported, as well as fit the capabilities of the properties. The DNR encourages citizen input throughout the planning process. This public involvement plan outlines the strategies the DNR will use to solicit public review and input into the development, evaluation and adoption of the amendments to the master plans for the following properties:

- Upper Wolf River Fishery Area
- Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area
- Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area.

Master Plan Amendment Process

The process to develop amendments to master plans is generally the same as for the development of master plans and is divided into three phases:

Phase 1

Phase one is the preparatory work by DNR staff. Information on the properties' resources and public uses, as well as on broader regional demands and opportunities, is gathered. The amount of data and information included in this phase is a function of what is currently available and the complexity of the properties, their use, and other issues that may arise. This phase finishes with a public announcement of the department's intent to amend the master plans, ways the public can receive information and opportunities to comment.

Phase 2

Phase two is the development of the draft amendment. The DNR will use the initial public input along with other data to evaluate management options. This phase also includes an assessment of potential environmental impacts or outcomes that may arise if the amendment is approved and implemented. Once completed, the DNR releases the draft amendment for public review and comment. DNR staff review the public input and make changes to the document as needed.

Phase 3

Phase three involves the presentation of the proposed amendment to the Natural Resources Board (NRB) for their review and possible approval. The DNR provides the NRB with a summary of the public comments received and an explanation for how the initial draft amendment was revised. The public can provide comments directly to the NRB (see <http://dnr.wi.gov/about/nrb/public.html>).

Opportunities to participate

The department's goals for public involvement in property planning are to offer the public meaningful ways to: (1) be involved in shaping the future management and use of DNR lands and (2) provide ways for interested people to stay informed about the property and planning progress.

Public review and comment will be formally sought at key milestone points during the plan's development and approval process. However, it should be noted that public comments are welcome at any time. The formal public input points in the process are:

- At the beginning of the amendment process. This will help identify property and planning issues and initial thoughts on potential changes to an existing master plan.
- After the release of the draft amendment and the assessment of potential impacts.
- At the presentation of the proposed amendment to the NRB. The NRB offers the public an opportunity to provide input directly to them when they consider approval of the proposed master plan revision.

How decisions will be made

To develop an effective property master plan, amendment or variance, the DNR listens to many voices. Recreation users, commercial interests, landowners, conservation groups, elected officials, other government agencies, tribal representatives and other interested parties are all encouraged to participate. Input received in the planning process will be considered as the planning documents are developed.

Although the department hopes to receive comments on the management of properties and potential changes to the master plans, input is not counted as votes with the "winning" point of view selected. Rather, our approach to analyzing the input received is to carefully read through all the comments and material presented to find common themes and issues. Our goal is to identify the range of perspectives and the reasoning behind these stances.

Decisions on which ideas to incorporate into the amendment will be made based on the following:

- type of property and its physical and biological opportunities and limitations,
- the best role of the property in its local, regional and statewide context,
- the professional expertise of DNR staff, and
- applicable Federal Laws, State Statutes, Administrative and Department Codes, facility design standards, funding requirements, easements or other restrictions.

While a broad range of interests will be considered when developing the draft master plan, the final decision-making authority on the master plan rests with the DNR's policy-making body - the Natural Resources Board.

How the DNR will provide planning information to you

Issue Press Releases

Press releases will be issued at key stages of the project to announce public meetings, provide information updates and to solicit public comments.

Direct Mailings (email)

The department uses GovDelivery, an electronic notification system, to keep interested parties informed about upcoming events and discussions. The department will use GovDelivery to send out emails at key points in the planning process with information about the property and planning issues, and to announce meetings, decisions, and other planning developments.

To sign-up for GovDelivery notifications, go to the DNR webpage, type in the key word “master planning” and look for the Northwoods Amendments under the “Master plans in progress” tab. From there, click on “Subscribe to Updates.” You may also sign up for the mailing list by contacting the department at the address or phone number listed at the end of this document.

Department Web Page

The department has set up a web page where draft documents, notices, and other important planning information about the amendments to the Upper Wolf River Fishery Area, Willow Flowage Scenic Waters Area and Turtle-Flambeau Scenic Waters Area master plans will be posted. To access this site, search for key word “master planning” on the DNR website and look for the Northwoods Amendments under the “Master plans in progress” tab.

Conduct Special Meetings if Needed

Additional public meetings may be held, if needed, at various stages of the planning process to discuss specific issues in depth. All meetings will be publicly announced ahead of time. Focus group meetings may be held with selected representatives to work through special management issues or other concerns that may arise.

Consultation with Other Governmental Units

Throughout the planning process, the master planning team will also be consulting with local governments, state and federal agencies, and affected Indian Tribes on a government-to-government basis on mutual planning issues.

Contact us:

If you have questions or would like to provide comments on the planning process, contact:

John Pohlman, Planner
john.pohlman@wisconsin.gov
608-264-6263

John Pohlman – LF/6
Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921